

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Wataru Ikeda et al.

Serial No.: 10/528,969

Filed: October 3, 2005

For: REPRODUCTION DEVICE, OPTICAL
DISC, RECORDING MEDIUM,
PROGRAM, AND REPRODUCTION
METHOD

Patent Examiner: Zhao, Daquan

Group Art Unit: 2621

August 21, 2008

Costa Mesa, California 92626

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sirs:

In response to the Office Action of June 10, 2008, please amend the above identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-66. (Cancelled)

67. (Currently Amended) A playback apparatus for playing back a first digital stream and a second digital stream in synchronization,

the first digital stream being recorded on an optical disc,

the second digital stream being recorded on a secondary recording medium,

5 the secondary recording medium having correspondence information recorded thereon, and

the correspondence information showing a file recorded on the secondary recording medium in correspondence with a file recorded on the optical disc,

the playback apparatus comprising:

10 ~~a secondary recording medium having a package area assigned to an optical disc to be mounted to the playback apparatus;~~

~~a specifying unit operable to, when the optical disc is mounted to the playback apparatus, obtain medium information from the optical disc and specify the package area in the secondary recording medium that corresponds to the obtained medium information;~~

15 an obtaining unit operable to obtain the correspondence information from the secondary recording medium;

a first reading unit operable to read [[a]] the first digital stream from the file shown by the correspondence information out of a plurality of files recorded on the optical disc;

a second reading unit operable to read [[a]] the second digital stream from the file
20 shown by the correspondence information out of a plurality of files recorded on the specified
package-area secondary recording medium; and

a playback unit operable to synchronously play back, in synchronization, pieces
of data included in the first digital stream and pieces of data included in the second digital
stream, with reference to a time stamp attached to each piece of data.

68. (Currently Amended) ~~The manufacturing method of Claim 67, wherein A~~
playback apparatus comprising:

a secondary recording medium having a package area corresponding to one of
optical discs;

5 a control unit operable to, when an optical disc is mounted to the playback
apparatus, obtain medium information from the mounted optical disc and specify the package
area in the secondary recording medium that corresponds to the obtained medium information;

a first reading unit operable to read a first digital stream from the mounted optical
disc;

10 a second reading unit operable to read a second digital stream from the specified
package area; and

a playback unit operable to play back, in synchronization, data included in the
first digital stream and data included in the second digital stream, wherein,

15 the secondary recording medium has correspondence information recorded
thereon, the correspondence information showing the first digital stream in correspondence with
the second digital stream, and

the readings by the first and the second reading units are performed based on the correspondence information.

69. (Currently Amended) The playback apparatus of Claim [[68]] 67, wherein

the correspondence information is ~~playlist information, the playlist information showing includes one or more pieces of starting point information, each piece of starting point information showing~~ a starting point and an ending point of a playback section in the first digital stream in correspondence with a starting point and an ending point of a playback section in the second digital stream;

the playback apparatus comprises a playback control unit operable to interpret the ~~playlist correspondence~~ information; and

the readings by the first and the second reading units and the playback by the playback unit are performed based on a result of the interpretation by the playback control unit.

70. (Currently Amended) The playback apparatus of Claim [[69]] 67, wherein

~~storage information is recorded in the package area,~~

~~the playback control unit takes out the playlist information from a location within the package area being indicated by the storage information, so as to interpret the playlist information.~~

the secondary recording medium has package areas assigned one-to-one to optical discs each mountable to the playback apparatus, and

the obtaining unit is operable to, when an optical disc is mounted to the playback apparatus, obtain medium information from the mounted optical disc and to specify one of the

10 package areas in the secondary recording medium that corresponds to the obtained medium information.

71. (Currently Amended) The playback apparatus of Claim 69, wherein

the secondary recording medium has a program recorded thereon, the program showing a procedure for playback control of the first and the second digital streams using the playlist information,

5 the playback apparatus comprises an execution module ~~for executing~~ operable to execute the program recorded on the secondary recording medium, and

the playback control unit ~~interprets the playlist information~~ is operable to interpret the correspondence information based on a function call within the program.

72. (Currently Amended) The playback apparatus of Claim 67, wherein

the correspondence information includes a stream identifier identifying one of elementary streams multiplexed on the second digital stream.

the playback unit includes:

5 a first demultiplexer operable to demultiplex a part of the first digital stream to obtain ~~pieces of video data and pieces of first audio data~~ a video stream; and

a second demultiplexer operable to demultiplex a part of the second digital stream ~~to obtain pieces of second audio data~~ read by the second reading unit to separate the elementary stream identified by the stream identifier included in the correspondence information, and

10 the synchronous playback by the playback unit is performed with reference to time stamps attached to a plurality of pieces of data constituting the video stream and to a plurality of data constituting the elementary stream separated from the second digital stream. ;

~~a video decoder operable to decode video data;~~

~~an audio decoder; and~~

15 ~~a supplying subunit operable to supply either the pieces of first audio data or the
pieces of second audio data to the audio decoder, wherein~~

~~the playback unit achieves the playback in synchronization by, in a case where the
pieces of second audio data are supplied to the audio decoder, synchronizing the decoding of
each piece of second audio data by the audio decoder with the decoding of each piece of video~~
20 ~~data by the video decoder.~~

73. (Currently Amended) The playback apparatus of Claim 72, ~~comprising wherein~~

~~the first demultiplexer is operable to demultiplex the first digital stream to
separate a video stream from another elementary stream multiplexed on the first digital stream,~~

~~the playback apparatus comprises a system register operable to store a system~~
5 ~~register that stores therein a parameter showing a status setting of the playback apparatus,~~
 ~~wherein and~~

~~whether the audio decoder playback unit decodes the plurality of pieces of first
audio data belonging to the first digital stream or the plurality of pieces of second audio data
belonging to the second digital stream is determined according to the parameter in the system~~
10 ~~register.~~

74. (Previously Presented) The playback apparatus of Claim 73, comprising

 a control unit operable to display a menu, wherein the parameter in the system
register is updated in accordance with a selection from the displayed menu.

75. (Previously Presented) The playback apparatus of Claim 73, comprising
a receiving unit operable to receive a user operation, wherein
the parameter in the system register is updated in accordance with the user
operation received by the receiving unit.

76. (Currently Amended) The playback apparatus of Claim ~~[[67]]~~ 69, wherein
the elementary streams multiplexed on the first and second digital streams include
at least one of a sub-image stream and an audio stream, and
the playback unit is operable to perform the synchronous playback by playing
5 back video data constituting the video stream, in synchronism with subtitles obtained by
decoding the sub-image stream or with audio data obtained by decoding the audio stream.

the playback unit includes:

a first demultiplexer operable to demultiplex a part of the first digital stream to
obtain pieces of video data and first sub-image units;

10 a second demultiplexer operable to demultiplex a part of the second digital stream
to obtain second sub-image units;

a video decoder operable to decode video data;

an image decoder; and

15 a supplying subunit operable to supply either the first sub-image units or the
second sub-image units to the image decoder, wherein

the playback unit achieves the playback in synchronization by, in a case where the
second sub-image units are supplied to the image decoder, synchronizing the decoding of each

~~second sub-image unit by the image decoder with the decoding of each piece of video data by the video decoder.~~

77. (Cancelled)

78. (Currently Amended) A recording method for recording a digital stream on a recording medium to be used as a secondary to an optical disc on which a first digital stream is recorded, wherein

~~the recording medium has a package area that corresponds to the optical disc to be~~
5 ~~used with the recording medium, and~~

~~the package area has a second digital stream and correspondence information recorded thereon, the correspondence information showing the second digital stream on the recording medium in correspondence with the first digital stream.~~

the method comprising the steps of:

10 specifying, when the optical disc is mounted to a playback apparatus, a package area that corresponds to the optical disc, out of a plurality of package areas in the secondary recording medium; and

recording a second digital stream and correspondence information on the specified package area, wherein

15 the correspondence information shows a file recorded on the secondary recording medium in correspondence with a file recorded on the optical disc, and

each of a plurality of pieces of data included in the second digital stream is attached with a time stamp set to a value that allows the second digital stream to be played back in synchronism with the first digital stream.

79. (Currently Amended) The recording ~~medium~~ method of Claim 78, wherein
the correspondence information is playlist information which shows a starting
point and an ending point of a playback section in the second digital stream in correspondence
with a starting point and an ending point of a playback section in the first digital stream.

80. (Currently Amended) The recording ~~medium~~ method of Claim 79, ~~having~~
wherein the secondary recording medium has a program recorded thereon, the program showing
a procedure for playback control using the playlist information.

81. (Currently Amended) The recording ~~medium~~ method of Claim 80, wherein
the procedure for playback control is to perform playback using the playlist
information under a condition, and
the condition is defined by a system parameter which shows a status setting of a
5 playback apparatus.

82. (Currently Amended) The recording ~~medium~~ method of Claim 78, wherein
the first digital stream includes video data and audio data, and
the second digital data includes audio data.

83. (Currently Amended) The recording ~~medium~~ method of Claim 78, wherein
the first digital stream includes video data and sub-image units, [[,]] and
the second digital stream includes sub-image units.

84. (Currently Amended) A ~~program for making a computer execute playback processing, computer-readable recording medium storing a program that causes a computer to play back a first digital stream and a second digital stream in synchronization,~~

the first digital stream being recorded on an optical disc,

5 the second digital stream being recorded on a secondary recording medium,

the secondary recording medium having correspondence information recorded thereon, and

the correspondence information showing a file recorded on the secondary recording medium in correspondence with a file recorded on the optical disc, the program

10 comprising code operable to cause the computer to perform the steps of:

~~a specifying step of, when an optical disc is mounted to a playback apparatus, obtain medium information from the optical disc and specify a package area in a secondary recording medium that corresponds to the obtained medium information;~~

obtaining the correspondence information from the secondary recording medium;

15 ~~a first reading step of reading [[a]]~~ the first digital stream from the file shown by the correspondence information out of a plurality of files recorded on the optical disc;

~~a second reading step of reading [[a]]~~ the second digital stream from the file shown by the correspondence information out of a plurality of files recorded on the specified package area; and, and

20 ~~a playback step of playing back, in synchronization,~~ synchronously playing back a plurality of pieces of data included in the first digital stream and a plurality of pieces of data

included in the second digital stream, with reference to a time stamp attached to each piece of data.

85. (Currently Amended) A playback method for playing back a first digital stream and a second digital stream in synchronization,

the first digital stream being recorded on an optical disc,

the second digital stream being recorded on a secondary recording medium,

5 the secondary recording medium having correspondence information recorded thereon, and

the correspondence information showing a file recorded on the secondary recording medium in correspondence with a file recorded on the optical disc, the recording method comprising the steps of:

10 ~~a specifying step of, when an optical disc is mounted to a playback apparatus, obtain medium information from the optical disc and specify a package area in a secondary recording medium that corresponds to the obtained medium information;~~

~~a first reading step of reading [[a]]~~ the first digital stream from the file shown by the correspondence information out of a plurality of files recorded on the optical disc;

15 ~~a second reading step of reading [[a]]~~ the second digital stream from the file shown by the correspondence information out of a plurality of files recorded on the specified package area; and

~~a playback step of playing back, in synchronization,~~ synchronously playing back a plurality of pieces of data included in the first digital stream and a plurality of pieces of data

20 included in the second digital stream, with reference to a time stamp attached to each piece of data.

86. (New) A playback method comprising:

a controlling step of, when an optical disc is mounted to a playback apparatus, obtaining medium information from the mounted optical disc and specifying a package area in a secondary recording medium that corresponds to the obtained medium information;

5 a first reading step of reading a first digital stream from the mounted optical disc;

a second reading step of reading a second digital stream from the specified-package area; and

a playback step of playing back, in synchronization, data included in the first digital stream and data included in the second digital stream.

REMARKS

It is believed that the amendments to the claims have more than adequately addressed the informalities of the previous Claim 68 and the 35 U.S.C. §101 issues raised relative to Claims 78 and 84.

Our amended claims have added features such as the correspondence of time stamps. As can be appreciated, there are differences between a time stamp for a master clock, for example on the optical disc, and a secondary recording medium. As one example, reference can be made to Figure 16 wherein audio packets in an AV stream have time stamps that have serial values attached. An AV stream from the disclosure in Figure 6 of an update kit has audio packets with time stamps that will be largely different. Thus, it is not possible to simply switch between the audio packets in the two separate AV streams.

The difference between the time stamps can be defined as an offset in the stream management information and accordingly, it is possible to play back in synchronization the audio packets of the optical disc and the audio packets on the secondary recording medium.

Additionally, there are differences between the playlist or PL information as recorded on the optical disc and the playlist on the secondary recording medium.

Our current claim amendments are supported by the "CELL information" shown in Figures 17 and 18 as well as the following paragraphs (from Page 40, Line 5 to Page 42, Line 25) of the original specification:

FIG. 17 shows the internal structure of PL information (UYYY.PL). Each piece of CELL information...of the files recorded on the optical disc.

As stated in the above-cited paragraphs, each piece of CELL information includes "Clip Entry," "Audio Table," and "Subtitle Table." "Clip Entry" includes "AVStream Name"

indicating the file name of an AV stream recorded on the optical disc (BD-ROM) and “In point information” and “Out point information” of the AV stream. “Audio Entry” includes “AVStream Name” indicating the file name of an audio stream recorded on the hard disk, “Audio Stream ID” identifying an audio stream, “In point information” and “Out point information” of the AV stream.

The arrows rf1, rf2, and rf3 in Figure 18 indicate the specifications of playback sections with “AVStream Name,” “In point information,” and “Out point information of Clip Entries. In addition, the arrows pf1, pf2, and pf3 in Figure 18 indicate the specifications of playback sections with “AVStream Name,” “In point information,” and “Out point information” of Audio Entries. Figure 18 clearly discloses that each piece of CELL information in Figure 17 shows the correspondence between the AV stream recorded on the optical disc (BD-ROM) and the AV stream recorded on the secondary recording medium (hard disk).

The above-cited paragraphs of the original specification (Page 40, Line 5 to Page 42, Line 24) basically disclose a claimed concept of indicating the correspondence between the file name of an AV stream recorded on the optical disc and the file name of an AV stream recorded on the secondary recording medium. Thus, the correspondence information is duly disclosed in the specification as originally filed.

Similarly, the following components recited in the amended claims are supported by the original specification. First of all, the “obtaining unit (step)” is supported by Step S1 of the flowchart shown in Figure 19. In step S1, the PL information #x that includes CELL information is read into the memory. The first and second reading units are supported by Step S4 of the flowchart shown in Figure 19 as well as by the BD drive 1 and the hard disk 12. In step S4, the CCESS UNITs are read from the BD-ROM and from the local HD. Finally, the playback unit is

supported by steps S5 and S9 of the flowchart shown in Figure 19. In step S5, the video frames constituting each ACCESS UNIT are input to the video decoder 4. In step S9, the audio frames constituting each ACCESS UNIT are input to the audio decoder 6.

The other amendments are merely editorial corrections resulting from the amendment to add the correspondence information and the obtaining unit. Thus, no new matter is introduced.

The Office Action rejected each of the outstanding claims as being completely anticipated by the *Onoda et al.* (Japanese Laid-Open Application 2002-247526).

“‘[T]he dispositive question regarding anticipation is whether one skilled in the art would reasonably understand or infer from the prior art reference’s teaching that every claim [limitation] was disclosed in that single reference.’ *Dayco Prods., Inc. v. Total Containment, Inc.*, F.3d 1358, 1368 (Fed. Cir. 2003).

The playback apparatus recited in the amended Claim 67 (hereinafter, referred to as the “present invention”) has the following characterizing features:

the secondary recording medium has correspondence information recorded thereon;

the correspondence information shows a file recorded on the secondary recording medium in correspondence with a file recorded on the optical disc; and

the playback apparatus executes synchronous playback of the first and second digital streams stored in the respective files shown by the correspondence information.

With reference to the correspondence information, our playback apparatus is enabled to specify specific data that corresponds to the second digital stream, out of various pieces of data recorded on the optical disc. Since the playback apparatus achieves a synchronous playback of the first digital stream recorded on the optical disc and the second digital stream recorded on the secondary recording medium by defining the correspondence information to that effect, it is

thereby easy to create different versions of a movie production by improving and/or developing; the first digital stream recorded on the optical disc during editing.

More specifically, after distribution of the optical disc storing the first digital stream to users, the second digital stream is distributed to the users along with the correspondence information showing the correspondence between the first and second digital streams. In this way, it is possible to create and distribute additional versions of the movie production after the distribution of the optical disc, although the creation of such additional versions was not planned at the original time of the optical disc distribution.

A distinguishing feature of the present invention is the ability to execute playback in accordance with the correspondence information.

The *Onoda et al.* reference (JP 2002-247526) is directed to a specific technique for playback of a video stream recorded on an optical disc synchronously with an audio or sub-image stream supplied from an external source. The optical disc mentioned herein is a DVD video disc. A stream data recorded on the optical disc is read with an optical pickup mechanism 13. The external input unit 62 is supplied with external stream data via a disc medium 63 such as a CD, DVD, HDD, DVD-R, DVD-RW, etc., the semiconductor memory medium 64, or the communications mechanism such as a network (see Paragraph 0019).

The external stream data mentioned herein bears the packet source structure shown in Figure 3 and the packet header indicates, as timing information, a PTS for establishing synchronous playback with the video packet of the DVD video disc currently being played. Therefore, the decoding control unit 61 is supplied with the internal system clock reference of the apparatus (see Paragraph 0037). Based on the internal standard time (i.e., system clock) of

the apparatus, decoding of the video packet is synchronized with decoding of the external data packet (i.e., audio data packet).

Suppose that the external stream data is audio data for audio playback in a language that is different from the language audio recorded on the DVD video disc 11. In this case, the user is allowed to view the video recorded on the DVD video disc 11 that is played in synchronism with the different audio language. Suppose that the external stream data is sub-picture data for playback of subtitles in a language that is different from the subtitle language recorded on the DVD video disc 11. In this case, the user is allowed to view the video recorded on the DVD video disc 11 that is played in synchronism with the subtitles in the different language. (See Paragraph 0036)

The present invention differs from the *Onoda et al.* reference in how a stream is selected for synchronous playback with the digital stream on the recording medium. According to the *Onoda et al.* reference, the stream to be synchronized is selected based on information (i.e., PGCI: Program Chain Information) recorded on the DVD video disc, which is an optical disc. Paragraph 0032 cited by the Office Action states that the DVD video disc 11 stores the video title set PGCI table for managing the video stream as a title. The general information included in the video title set PGCI table includes an audio stream control information table and a sub-picture stream control information table. The audio stream control information table includes (i) flags each indicating whether or not the respective audio streams are valid within the current program chain and (ii) the stream numbers. Similarly, the sub-picture stream control information table includes (i) flags each indicating whether or not the respective sub-picture streams are valid within the current program chain and (ii) the stream numbers corresponding to the display aspects (4:3, wide, and letter box). With reference to the management information shown in

Figure 4, the system control unit 50 can, therefore, acknowledge the number of audio streams and the number of sub-picture streams contained in the currently played DVD video disc.

That is, the PGCI includes the stream numbers 1-M each indicating a different one of the audio streams recorded on the DVD video disc 11, which is an optical disc. In response to a user operation of selecting a stream number N that falls within the range of 1 and M, the corresponding audio stream recorded on the DVD video disc 11 is read. On the other hand, in response to a user operation of selecting a stream number N that is greater than M ($N > M$), an external audio stream supplied via the network or another medium is read (see Paragraph 0035). Therefore, the stream to be synchronized is not selected, according to any correspondence information.

The present invention further differs from *Onoda et al.* in that the *Onoda et al.* reference lacks any information that associates the stream recorded on the optical disc with an external stream not recorded on the optical disc. The Office Action cites Paragraph 0031 and alleged the playlist information is disclosed. However, the cited Paragraph actually discloses a video title set PGCI table that includes PGCI.

The PGCI designates cell playback information (C_PBI) that specifies the head address of the first VOB in the cell and the head address of the last VOB in the cell. The system control unit 50 therefore controls the servo unit 18 and the motor 12 to read data from the optical disc in a manner to acquire VOBs constituting the cell as defined by the cell playback information. That is to say, the head address of the first VOB in the cell and the head address of the last VOB are used to control the servo unit 18 and the motor 12. The respective addresses are not for an audio or sub-picture stream recorded on an external medium to be synchronously played with the VOBs recorded on the optical disc.

The Office Action also cited Paragraph 0024 that describes a DSI included in a VOB. The DSI includes, as general information, a system clock for the NV_pack that includes the VOB, the end address of the VOB, and the end address of the reference picture (I-picture).

The DSI also includes, as seamless information (SML_PBI), the category of the VOB, the end address of an interleave unit, and the size and start address of next interleave unit to jump to. The interleave units are data units of the DVD video disc 11 that constitutes a multi-angle section. Similarly to the head address of the first VOB in the cell and the head address of the last VOB in the cell, these addresses are also used to control the servo unit 18 and the motor 12.

Thus, it is still true that there is provided no synchronous information specifying the addresses of an audio or sub-picture stream recorded on an external medium to be synchronously played with the VOBs recorded on the optical disc. It is, therefore, concluded that the PGCI and DCI according to *Onoda et al.* are not to realize playback of an audio or sub-picture stream recorded on an external apparatus, instead of an audio or sub-picture image recorded on the DVD disc.

The process performed by the playback apparatus at the time when an optical disc is mounted is also different. According to *Onoda et al.*, when an optical disc is mounted to the playback apparatus, PGCI is read from the optical disc and playback is executed in accordance with the read PGCI. In view of this, the playback apparatus of *Onoda et al.* cannot perform the playback process according to the present invention. That is, the playback apparatus of *Onoda et al.* does not perform a process of reading correspondence information from the secondary recording medium.

As clarified above, the present invention differs from the *Onoda et al.* reference in: how a stream to be synchronously played is selected; the presence of correspondence information that associates a stream recorded on the optical disc with a stream not recorded on the optical disc; and the process performed at the time when an optical disc is mounted. The playback apparatus of *Onoda et al.* is not provided with a component for specifying a package area corresponding to the optical disc out of a plurality of package areas of the secondary recording medium (i.e., not provided with the correspondence information). In addition, the playback apparatus of *Onoda et al.* is not provided with a component for reading a stream recorded on the secondary recording medium and supplying the read stream for playback (i.e., not provided with the second reading unit).

By virtue of our specifying unit and the first reading unit, the present invention achieves the following advantageous effect. Suppose that both the optical disc and the secondary recording medium have a plurality of digital streams recorded thereon and each digital stream on the secondary recording medium is for synchronous playback with a different one of the digital streams recorded on the optical disc. Still, the playback apparatus according to the present invention duly specifies which of the digital streams recorded on the secondary recording medium is associated with which of the digital streams recorded on the optical disc and thus reads appropriate digital streams from the optical disc and the secondary recording medium to supply them to the playback unit to execute synchronous playback. As above, the playback apparatus according to the present invention implements synchronous playback of a digital stream recorded on the optical disc and a digital stream recorded on the secondary recording medium, even if the optical disc and the secondary recording medium each have a plurality of

digital streams recorded thereon. The *Onoda et al.* reference is not directed to realize such synchronous playback and cannot anticipate our present invention.

Claims 69-76 are dependent from Claim 67 and thus have the same distinguishing features of the present invention as described above. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that those claims are also novel over the *Onoda et al.* reference at least for the same reasons stated above for the present invention.

Claim 84 directed to a computer-readable recording medium and Claim 85 directed to a playback method both have the distinguishing features of the present invention as described above, although those claims fall in different categories. That is to say, Claims 84 and 85 represent the same valuable contribution to the state of the art as that represented by the present invention. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that those claims are also novel and non-obvious over the *Onoda et al.* reference at least for the same reason stated for the present invention.

Claims 78-82 are directed to a recording method and the distinguishing feature thereof lies in the processing related to the recording. Thus, Claims 78-82 have a different distinguishing feature from that of Claims 67-76.

The processing related to the recording mentioned above involve:

(i) specifying when the optical disc is mounted to a playback apparatus, a package area that corresponds to the optical disc out of a plurality of package areas in the secondary recording medium; and

(ii) recording a second digital stream and correspondence information on the specified package area.

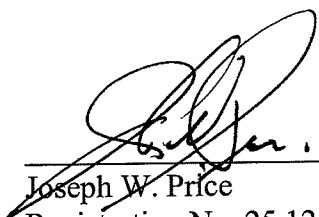
In other words, the processing is to realize a novel and unique way of recording a digital stream for allowing the playback apparatus recited in Claim 67 to realize the above playback processing. In other words, according to Claims 78-82, the second digital stream and the correspondence information are recorded into an appropriate one of package areas on the secondary recording medium (i.e., the package area that corresponds to an optical disc to be mounted to the playback apparatus). Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that those claims are also novel over the *Onoda et al.* reference at least for the same reasons stated for the present invention above.

It is believed that the case is now in condition for allowance and an early notification of the same is requested.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone interview will assist in the prosecution of the present case, the undersigned attorney can be contacted at the listed phone number.

Very truly yours,

SNELL & WILMER L.L.P.



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